



**PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**Meeting Notes of January 18, 2023**

**Commissioners present:** Charles Mathews, Scott Erwin, John Carr, Joel Metlen, Bayley Boggess, Gary Walvatne, and Tom Watton

**Staff present:** Planning Manager Darren Wyss, Associate Planner John Floyd, Associative Planner Chris Myers, Assistant Planner Ben Gardner, and Administrative Assistant Lynn Schroder

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The meeting video is available on the [City website](#).

**1. Call To Order and Roll Call**

Chair Walvatne called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. New Commissioner Tom Watton introduced himself.

**2. Public Comment Related To Land Use Items Not On The Agenda**

None.

**3. Approval of Meeting Notes: 12.07.2022**

Commissioner Carr moved to approve the meeting notes for 12.07.22. Erwin seconded. **Ayes: Erwin, Carr, Mathews, Metlen, Boggess, and Walvatne. Nays: None. Abstentions: Watton. The motion passed 6-0-1.**

**4. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair**

Commissioner Erwin nominated John Carr as Chair. Commissioner Walvatne seconded. Commissioners elected John Carr to serve as Chair for one year. **Ayes: Mathews, Boggess, Metlen, Watton, Erwin, and Walvatne. Nays: None. Abstentions: Carr. The motion passed 6-0-1.**

Commissioner Boggess nominated Joel Metlen as Vice-Chair. Commissioner Mathews seconded. Commissioners elected Joel Metlen to serve as Vice-Chair for one year. **Ayes: Walvatne, Boggess, Erwin, Watton, Mathews, and Carr. Nays: None. Abstentions: Metlen. The motion passed 6-0-1.**

**5. [Briefing: Clear and Objective Standards Compliance Project](#)**

John Floyd, Associate Planner, briefed the PC on the Clear and Objective Standards Compliance Project and the project timeline.

As required by State statute, local governments may only adopt and apply clear and objective housing standards, conditions, and procedures. The primary focus of the Clear and Objective Code Compliance Project is to ensure the West Linn Community Development Code (CDC) complies with this requirement. The City Council delegated a Working Group to review and recommend proposed CDC changes. The working group completed their recommendation in Fall 2022.

Floyd discussed clear and objective legal standards. The standard does allow a two-track review system that provides discretionary review. A two-track system offers both certainty and flexibility.

**6. [Work Session: Accessory Dwelling Unit Code Amendment Project](#)**

This is the second workshop on the Accessory Dwelling Unit Code Amendment Project. Chris Myers,

Associate Planner, with Ben Gardner, Assistant Planner, led discussions on five policy questions.

**Should the visual design of ADUs be regulated in relation to the existing dwelling?**

Commissioner Mathews wanted the ADUs to have some design relation to the primary home. He suggested developing clear and objective standards with this goal. Commissioner Metlen noted that design standards for ADUs could limit property owners from installing ADUs that meet their needs. He wanted to encourage ADUs. Commissioner Boggess agreed with Metlen. She stated that design standards would add barriers to housing. Commissioner Erwin also agreed with Metlen and Boggess. He wanted the CDC to allow prefabricated ADUs. Also, he noted that homeowners might remodel their homes, and the ADU and primary structure could get out of design sync. Last, he suggested that the design standards might not be legally enforceable since they only apply to one housing type. Commissioner Walvatne stated that the City does not regulate what adjacent homes look like. Still, he pointed out a proposed addition to a townhome development with a different design than the original one, making it stand out against the original development design. Boggess commented that design difference was an aesthetic consideration and should not be regulated by the CDC. She stated that the CDC should focus on providing housing opportunities. Chair Carr noted that the City does not restrict dwelling design on the same lot for other housing types, so he did not support design requirements for ADUs. He said that there are CCRs in neighborhoods that may address design standards. Commissioner Mathews noted that the difference between adding ADUs and new-builds is that current homeowners expectation of how the established neighborhood will look should be respected. He stated that the Planning Commission represents the current residents of West Linn, not those who want to move in.

**Should the placement of ADUs be limited in relation to the primary dwelling?**

Commissioner Mathews wanted ADUs to be setback from the primary structure. Commissioner Metlen, noting West Linn topography, did not support setback requirements. Commissioner Boggess did not support setbacks because of the difference in parcel configuration. Commissioner Erwin pointed out that garages could be forward of the primary structure, so he did not support setback requirements for ADUs. Commissioner Walvatne noted that most homes in West Linn could not accommodate an ADU on the side yard. He did not want free-standing ADUs to be sited in the front yard. Chair Carr did not support setback requirements. Commissioner Mathews requested a vote on this question. Chair Carr clarified that votes are not taken in work sessions.

**Should the number of bedrooms in ADUs be limited?**

Commissioners Walvatne, Carr, and Boggess did not support bedroom limits. Chair Carr noted that the PC had a consensus on removing bedroom limits.

**Should the size of ADUs be limited on a per-person basis?**

Commissioner Walvatne did not know how it could be regulated. Commissioner Erwin noted that the modern expectation for living space is different. Commissioner Carr did not support limiting ADUs size on a per-person basis. He noted the PC consensus on the matter.

**Should we limit the number of ADUs per residence? If so, should this limit apply to the residence or the overall property?**

Commissioner Mathews wanted to limit the number to one ADU per lot, noting the traffic and parking considerations. Commissioner Walvatne agreed.

Commissioner Watton noted that each ADU would require one parking off-street parking space.

Commissioner Boggess and Metlen did not consider this requirement necessary.

Commissioner Erwin asked about the difference between having two ADUs and having a plex. Gardner responded that plexes could be separated from the parent property, ADUs could not. Also, SDC fees may be different for plexes and ADUs. Last, ADUs could use existing utilities. Plexes need separate utilities.

Chair Carr was still determining if allowing more than one ADU on the property would be appropriate.

**7. Planning Commission Announcements**

Commissioner Erwin announced that the League of Oregon Cities and PSU have training Commissioners can take.

**8. Staff Announcements**

Planning Manager Wyss updated the Planning Commission on middle housing construction activity, Climate-friendly mandates, Planning Commission calendar.

**9. Adjourn**

Chair Carr adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:00 pm.